

## **My burden just as well by ascertainperson**

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**Summary:**

Everyone always talks about Will. But he is not the only one in the Party who is emotionally scarred.

## **My burden just as well**

July 10, 1985  
Hawkins, Indiana  
Maple Street

Mike was cowered behind one of many counters in Starcourt Mall. Except this time, he was all alone as one of the Mindflyers tentacles moved right past him, searching for it's next victim.

No Lucas to distract the beast. No El to destroy it. No Dustin to throw fireworks at it. No Hopper and Joyce closing the portal.

He held his breath as the tentacle moved past him. But there was no way he could hold it for much longer.

As he gasped for air, the tentacle turned around immediately, grabbing him, pulling him out of his hiding spot with such a force that he thought it would tear his arm off. But the pain of that was nothing on what was about to happen to him, as several more tentacles appeared, spearing him from all sides.

The boy let out a scream of utter terror as he awoke from his nightmare. His bed looked like someone had aimed a garden hose in it, and his clothes felt pretty much the same. In his panic, he jumped out of his bed, running out of his room, leaving the door to smash against the nearest wall, running down, all the way down, to the basement. The pillow fort that he built for El all these years ago. He curled up inside of it, his lungs burning from the hyperventilation.

\*It's alright, you're safe in here\* he thought. A thought he repeated over and over and over and over and over again. A thought that did nothing to calm him down. Nowhere was safe. He had seen the Mindflyer in action. Seen his physical form. Seen him smash through the roof of a mall. Spear Max's step-brother to death like he was a toy. If it wanted, it could easily find him, smash the entire building apart, and kill Mike. No wall was strong enough to keep it contained. They never defeated it. Never destroyed the Mindflyer. It was still out there. They only won because-

"Mike!"

A voice so familiar, yet so unexpected, even though it made perfect sense for Nancy to be there. She lived here too, and Mike must have caused quite the ruckus on the way down. Yet, the sound of her voice was enough to distract him from his panic, if just for a second.

When she saw him, curled up, hyperventilating, Nancy knew what was going on. They had covered it in first aid class. "Mike, look at me." she said, as she kneeled down in front of him. "Look at me, breathe." she said. It was enough to get her little brother's attention. "Count with me, okay?" she said, "One, two, three..." Nancy counted. And Mike did his best to count with her. His breathing slowed, though he still felt like his lungs were going to kill him.

"What happened?" she asked him in a calm voice, as he calmed down. "The Mindflayer." he said, "It got me, stabbed me just like it did to Billy." "It was just a dream Mike, okay? It was just a dream." Just a dream. Easy to say. Easy to say when you hadn't experienced said dream. "This one was worse." he said inbetween sobs, "I had dreams about that night eversince it happened. And they keep getting worse."

"You know how i was in the Upside Down one time?" she asked him, as she pulled her little brother into a hug, "I mean, it was not even a minute, but that minute was the scariest of my life. I sometimes still have nightmares. Especially since i realized how much worse it must've been for Will, being in there for a week."

Will. Will Will Will Will Will. Everyone only ever talked about how hard Will had had it. Sure, Will had had it worse than him, but Will hadn't been the only one who was scarred in the last 3 years.

"Everyone only ever talks about Will." Mike complained, "Just because he was the one who got abducted. But noone ever asked if i was okay after the Mindflayer tried to kill us, or after the demodogs got Bob, or what happened in the school."

Then, Mike's floodgates just opened. He had bottled up so many bad emotions. First, one tear trickled down his face, then another, then, he stopped trying to hold it back. The anger, the fear, the bitterness, it all just came pouring out as Mike cried for so long, he was afraid

he would dry up, still in Nancys embrace. "It's gonna be okay Mike." she whispered, as Mike slowly calmed back down again, "The Gate is shut, the Mindflayer is gone." "But it's still out there. It could still come back. And without El's powers, how would we stay any chance at defeating it again? We barely managed this time." "Let's worry about that when the time comes." she said, before amending, "If it ever comes."

Mike was a mess right now. A total mess. A sweaty, crying mess with a runny nose and red, swollen eyes, in the middle of the night, in a dusty pillow fort, in an equally dusty basement. And yet, Nancy didn't care. She didn't care in the slightest. All these years, the two had always fought more than anything. Sure, she had dressed up as an elf that one time, and they had promised each other to no longer keep things secret between them. But then? Beyond that, they had pretty much been in the same place.

His parents, they hadn't been a great help either. They didn't seem like they really loved each other, and just tried holding it together for their sake. His mom, sure, she loved him, but she didn't get him. And his dad, yeah, what was there to say about his dad? But in this moment, where, despite being such a mess, Nancy embraced him, didn't give a care in the world about anything else than being there for her little brother, just wanted him to feel better again, he came to wonder: Why had he ever fought with her?

Sure, he had been a jackass for quite a while, from the day El disappeared to the day she came back, but even before that, they would squabble over all types of things. But now, with all that they had been through, all these squabbles seemed almost like a happy memory. The good old times. And yet, a sad one as well. The good old times simply were no more.

"Thanks." he whispered back after some time of silence. "I guess... i guess i really needed this." Nancy chuckled. "I think we could both use some sleep now." she smiled, "And you may wanna change out of that pjyama before you drown in it. Mike rolled his eyes in an over-exaggerated manner. "I think i'll be sleeping here." he said, even though it would be quite the tight fit for him. "Whatever you say." she laughed, as she went up the stairs, turning off the light and shutting the door behind her, as Mike shortly after slipped into a

dreamless sleep.

**Author's Note:**

So yes, i hoped you liked it. Mainly wrote this because i feel Mike and Nancy is a relationship severely neglected in the show. They deserve more screentime.